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DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EAP/RSP/TC, EAP/PA, EAP/PD -
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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: SECRETARY POWELL'S VISIT TO
CHINA

A) "The Message Revealed by Powell's Whirlwind Beijing
Trip"

The pro-status quo "China Times" said in its
editorial(10/26):

". Since President Bush's remarks before Wen Jiabao
last year, there has been fine-tuning of the U.S. cross-
Strait policy. In addition to asking China not to `use
force,' the Republican government is more specific in
asking Taiwan not to `seek independence.' Taiwan
should not expect that the United States would defend
Taiwan under any circumstances. The Bush government in
its second term will put heavier pressure on Taiwan
than before. It will make itself clearer and clearer
regarding [Taiwan's] constitutional reforms and
referenda and will no longer tolerate any tension
caused by any misjudgment by the two sides.

"But what really concerns Taiwan is whether the United
States will push the two sides to go the negotiation
table next year. President Chen Shui-bian and Vice
President Annette Lu repeatedly stressed that early
spring of 2005 will be a good time for cross-Strait
talks. And now judging from Powell's remarks and the
remarks by National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice
on her recent visit to Beijing, one can say there is a
tacit agreement between Taiwan and the United States
about resuming cross-Strait talks. . However, the
United States is pushing for the talks for its own
interests. It does not want to get involved in a war
because of a deadlock, in which the two sides of the
Strait are to blame. Since Beijing is insistent on its
position, [seeking] `concessions by both sides' will
very likely become the reasoning behind the United
States exertion of pressure. Then, in what ways will
Taiwan be asked to make concessions may be the focus of
what we should pay attention to.

"In other words, we need to take into account the
upcoming [APEC] Bush-Hu summit, the new cross-Strait
policy planning of the new U.S. government, and the
possibility of resuming cross-Strait talks when
assessing Powell's Beijing visit."

B) "Speaking Clearly on Anti-independence and Pro-
unification, Powell Sacrifices Taiwan Independence; He
Repeatedly Reiterates That the United States Does Not
Support Taiwan Independence and Overturns the
`Ambiguity' Policy in One Move"

Washington Correspondent Vincent Chang wrote in the
conservative/pro-unification "United Daily News"
(10/26):

"On October 25, in addition to a press conference in
Beijing, Powell was interviewed by Hong Kong's Phoenix
Television and CNN. The U.S. Department of State, on
the other side of the world, released the entire
transcripts of the press conference and the interviews
even faster than the TV broadcasted [them].

"Powell's remarks denying `Taiwan' is a sovereign and
independent nation, on the one hand, indicates that
cross-Strait tension resulting from the various radical
measures taken by the DPP government since 2003 on the
referendum issue has made the Bush administration,
which has been friendly to Taiwan, determined to
frankly express its attitude without any ambiguity. On
the other hand, this reflects the reality that the Bush
administration must be engaged with the mainland. As a
result, it finally decided to sacrifice Taiwan
independence.

"These two statements by Powell, which can be said as
unheard of before to Taiwan, will rattle the most
sensitive nerves between the two sides of the Strait
for some time. How President Chen Shui-bian [should]
face this final move by the United States to completely
cut off any ambiguous link between `one-China' and
`Taiwan independence,' and the fact that the United

States may play a role in `facilitating unification,' is testing his wisdom as the head of state."

C) "The Pressure to Resume [Cross-Strait] Dialogue Falls on China"

Journalist Huang Chung-jung commented in the pro-independence "Liberty Times" (10/26):

". U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell visited Beijing and urged China to resume talks with Taiwan. The move evidently shows that the United States is aware that the key to the deadlocked cross-Strait situation does not lie in Taiwan. In order to defend its best interests in Asia, the United States will definitely put the pressure of resuming [cross-Strait] dialogue on China so as to effectively alleviate the tensions across the Taiwan Strait. .

"Judged from the strategic interests of those democratic countries like the United States and Japan, it would constitute a direct threat to these countries' security if Taiwan were annexed by China. As a result, to maintain the status quo in the Taiwan Strait is in the best interests of these democratic alliance countries - namely, Taiwan can maintain its sovereign and independent status and help the democratic camp whenever necessary. In the meantime, these countries also do not hope to see any moves that could provoke Beijing to use force against Taiwan. .

"The United States must urge China to engage in a dialogue with Taiwan because alleviating the cross-Strait situation will not increase Washington's burdens when it has to deal with other issues like North Korea and anti-terrorism. Such a development would also be conducive for the re-election of the Bush administration. This is exactly one of the major missions of Powell's trip to East Asia."

D) "Powell Visit No Cause for Panic"

The pro-independence, English language "Taipei Times" editorialized (10/26):

"U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell is set to discuss Taiwan's arms procurement plan with China when visiting Beijing next week. China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs Spokesperson Zhang Qiyue confirmed that Beijing and Washington will talk about the US-Taiwan arms deal, the cancellation of Taiwan-U.S. military exchanges and the Taiwan independence issue. Her words have caused a commotion in Taiwan's media. Independent Legislator Sisy Chen even said the United States will soon scrap its arms deal with Taiwan.

"But if we study the situation carefully, it's clear that the United States only says that it expects to have a chance to respond to the issue regarding the proposed arms deal. In other words, Washington's position will be `passive.' This stance is completely different from taking the initiative to discuss it, and the pan-blue camp is in fact creating trouble for itself by sensationalizing the issue. .

"Powell's decision to visit Japan, China and South Korea on the eve of the U.S. election is clearly aimed at achieving various diplomatic and domestic political goals. Although Taiwan needs to keep a close eye on Sino-US relations, and take precautions against the United States sacrificing Taiwan to win China's cooperation for its own advantage, we should watch developments calmly, avoiding reading too much into any given situation and frightening ourselves as a result."

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